OMP
source.
ND 20?

HOS, Green

ORIGINS

What got you started with computer media?

The painful experiences of the sixties, seventies and eighties made me angrier and angrier: I have always believed that Xanadu was the most important thing to have happen in the world, and others' not seeing this enraged me, let alone what both venture capitalists and uncomprehending programmers tried to make of it.

which we can now state as: personal computing, interactive software, interactive media, network publicaiton.

THE SAME STRUCTURE

As soon as I saw what computers were, it was clear to me what had to be done: th

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https://archive.org/details/hosgreahosyellow00tedn

Surrounded by fools. I hated the middle class and conventional people.

TED'S DIFFERENT SOFTWARE

You aren't considered a software designer, but you claim to be one and you give seminars.

Yup.

I think a software designer is like a movie director. There are so many parts to tie together, he can't be the programmer. But I believe there has to be a single director. The alternative is the appalling, sprawling, difficult software we see everywhere.

All my designs are unimplemented, but they'll be vindicated. My lastest design is trademarked "ZigZag." It's a unified structure for all software, taking place in a multidimensional folded quantum hyperspace. I'm sorry I can't tell you more, but it's still under wraps. The full system is trademarked "Dimensia."

How is this different from Internet?

The Internet is a wonderful achievement. Internet is a way of tying computers and networks together reliably, and sending materials between them. Fifteen or so million people on it already. But it doesn't take care of interconnected literature, or copyright, or royalty.

There's one nice system for interconnected literature now, called World Wide Web.

What is the World Wide Web?

World Wide Web is another wonderful achievement-- a hypertext system on the Internet that allows people to publish distributed documents that link to others. (I'm proud to have been credited with the idea for it.) But World Wide Web doesn't clean up the copyright problem, especially allowing people to quote each other within the body of text or graphics.

Aren't you bitter?

I used to be. I joined a California cult, the Human Awareness Institute, and now feel much better.

So now I'm much mellower. Except when it comes to discussing software. The present state of software enrages me. And all these programmers call me up and want to show me their interfaces. To me they all look alike, and if I had spare time I would sure want to do something else with it.

TED'S DIFFERENT SOFTWARE

There are three points of view in software design: one, Xerox PARC, which gave us disconnected windows and "metaphrs"-- the Macintosh point of view; two, The Media Lab, whose motto is "trust us," which basically promotes the old MIT artificial-intelligence ideology, but with a new flashy spin of their own; and mine. You can hear the first two in any grocery line now. Mine you only get from me, which I find most regrettable at this late stage.

I'm opposed to "metaphors," the popular way of talking about software design now. When everyone agrees, beware.

I thought I would be regarded as some sort of an expert on software design. I didn't imagine that thirty-four years later, everybody and his uncle would have fanatical views on software design. Now they laugh and don't listen. I expect to have the last laugh.

Q. Why don't you even get the credit?

It's partly linguistic. They say "interactive multimedia" now, and don't realize that was what I was writing about in 1965.

Why do you hate word processing?

Because it's shallow and stupid. It cuts the connections. Whatever materials you bring in from other versions or other documents lose the connetion to their orirnal contexts-- which you need to refer to over and over.

That's my paradigm for all software: being able instantly to see the connections and origins of everything. And while the need for this is being gradually recognized everywhere-- witness Microsoft's new products-- the solutions are shallow and ungeneral.

You are known as the originator of hypertext and hypermedia.

What is the difference between "hypermedia," "interactive media" and "interactive multimedia? and "interactive media"?

Damned if I know.

HERE ----------

HO d5 ----------

incl. Omni Piece, more.

What got you started?
So let's call that Destiny Three.
The YYth great moment was in
THE VISION
What did they have in common?

I don't know what I saw then. What I know now is that they were all daring and original in their separate ways.

The first was w

(like my classmates in seventh grade, for taking all that abuse and believing what they were told)

What were the defining moments in your career?

Several.

Do you have any hobbies?

Well, if getting Xanadu up is my profession, then I suppose movie-making is my hobby.

One was when I knew I was onto something philosophically. I said something complicated in seminar, the kind of thing I'd always been saying and no one had understood, and Scriven said "Of course!" I don't know what it was I said, but I realized somebody brilliant COULD understand me, and I had valid things to say.

One was when I got the franchise to do the school musical, and I realized it could be ANYTHING AT ALL. The complete freedom of a tabula rasa. So I decided to do a ROCK MUSICAL, something no one had ever heard of, and everybody tried to talk me out of it. But I loved rock'n'roll, and I was damn-all going to do it.

The XXth defining moment was my last month in college, when I saw the first scene I had shot for my movie, "The Epiphany of Slocum Furlow." It was absolutely clear: I was need it for survival.

Freedom of the press is for those who own one.
Real minority views just cannot get heard.

HERE ----------

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28
29

a born film-maker. This was my destiny. Let's call it Destiny One. Except I just had to finish up this General Schematics business.

What other great moments do you remember?

This is peculiar, but I had a psych professor my sophomore year who who was the most pigheaded individual I ever met. Let's call him professor P. As I recall, he thought there was only one way to interpret any experiment. He did not see the interpenetrations of principle that swoop in every direction through the world.

Eleven years later I met an even more pigheaded individual, a loudmouth who was the big honcho in CAI, or Computer-Assisted Instruction, which was thought by some to be the great new thing.

I tried to tell him about hypertext, but he misunderstood me and shouted me down. Then he said, *"Of course, I get all my ideas from Professor P.!"*

Well well, I thought, of course you do. So the universe is understandable, and I'm really onto something.

DUNNO

What's it all about?

A single point of view;
and, I suppose, the determination, self-confidence, ego if you will--
to pursue it in the face of everybody else's point of view.

Where do you want to be five years from now?

Geographically, I don't much care.
I want Xanadu publishing to be the major force it can be.
We need it for everything. We need it for freedom. We need it for survival.

Freedom of the press is for those who own one.
Real minority views just cannot get heard.

30

HO d4 ----------

HO d3 ----------

You are also known for not finishing anything...
a period of a few weeks
and interaction,

HO d ----------

ENDLINE **STAY OFF HERE**

That connects with my Second Destiny.

What else do you do?

ACTUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

What are your actual achievements?

I've inspired people. Every conference I go to, several people tell me I've changed their lives.

My few published books have had considerable impact. *Computer Lib*, for instance, came out in 1974 and predicted the personal-computer revolution, which began the next year, and the universality of computer screens for all work, which no one else seemed to foresee. In 1977, my book *The Home Computer Revolution* predicted the downfall of IBM. People scoffed, but then it started happening. (I think they have a lot further to fall, but at least it didn't bring down the world economy, which I feared.)

Then my 1981 book, *Literary Machines*, threw down the gauntlet for network publishing, and defined a seriously high goal for what it should be about. I stated the Xanadu idea and plan. It hasn't happened yet, but it inspired Tim Berners-Lee to create the World Wide Web.

Have you gone on with this philosophy stuff?

Yes. In high school I was briefly a disciple of Korzybski, or rather of his disciple Hayakawa (who later showed that Semantics did not settle problems, when he called in the police to quell student protests).

In college I was a disciple of Michael Scriven, a brilliant analytical philospher. His encouragement made me sure that I was onto something. By then, 1957, I was working out my own philosophical system, based on concepts from structural linguistics.

Why didn't you go into academia as a career?

Because the other half of me was in show business. My junior year at Swarthmore College I put on a show called "Anything & Everything" which was, as far as I know, the first rock musical. I wanted to make history with it. Like, who cares. I've been more concerned with making history, unfortunately, then with issues like survival and cash flow.

In a way I HAVE gone into philosophy, because I've kept up the General Schematics work.

What have you written on General Schematics?

Alas, a few papers in college and graduate school, and hundreds of thousands of loose notes since. Writing it RIGHT, as a connected hypertext, has been my lifeps plan.

You call yourself a generalist. In what ways besides Xanadu?

Well, I've mentioned the philosophical work, which putt-putts along in the background.

I have a new basis for psychology, which came from a lot of places, especially Dawkins' *The Selfish Gene*. If evolution is true, we must be pretty well adapted. How come, then, that we get depressed? IT MUST BE PART OF A SYSTEM. So what is that system? My hypothesis-- the biostatus hypothesis-- is that the system of elation and dejection is a feedback method for rewarding success and discouraging failure (literally). From this stem a lot of interesting consequences, including simple recipes for making people happy and effective. I wrote a book-length manuscript on this in 1987 entitled *Biostrategy and Polymind*. Unfortunately I've lost it.

Another radical piece of work is my proposal for AIDS testing. Part of it was published in the *Whole Earth Review*, but the uncomprehending and snotty responses I got about it showed me that the time was not ripe. The only person to take it seriously was my strategy professor at Harvard, Thomas C. Schelling, but he declined to write a preface.

The proposal is straightforward but subtle: that everybody wear a pendant advocating AIDS testing, and that if you do get tested, and have a positive result, it gets hidden in the pendant. If the result is negative you just get the advocacy pendant, since no one would carry negative results anyway.

That way everybody is reminded of the problem up front, and when sex is actually contemplated-- and I'm not advocating promiscuity, as some seemed to think-- evidence is at hand, nobody can pretend to have forgotten it. Obviously it's dated evidence, but I believe more information is better than less.

The point was that this would make everyone more cautious, create pressure to be tested, and at the same time keep people from lying-- the objective being a contact curtain between the virus carriers and the non, that's all. But everyone thinks the injunction "use condoms!" settles the matter, and they're surprisingly moralistic about insisting that this is the only solution.

HO, Yellow

Your fans see you as an eccentric and creative maverick, your detractors consider you a nuisance. Which is it?

Both and the same. Any maverick is a pain to those on a different path. There are a lot of status and competition issues I didn't understand at the beginning.

Tell about Xanadu briefly.
There are so many conflicting legends.

Xanadu is my religion, my politics and my business venture. (In a way I feel very lucky, because I feel no conflict between these.)

It's a very specific software approach, which I call "xanalogical," to use the generic term.

WWW instant pub system

Same & dift

Transclusion-- comparison in context, purchase from original

IBM

Q. You've had a very long feud with IBM. How do you feel about that now?

As a kid I greatly admired IBM, because I went to a showing of the models they'd made of daVinci's inventions. I thought, any company that would support daVinci has to be great.

Then as I got into the computer field I saw how shallow and conventional they were, and decided that I had to design the literature of the future, because if IBM did it, it would mean the end of civilization.

During the sixties and seventies, after I had fallen afoul of some of IBM's business practices, it went further: I became convinced that IBM was suppressing the next step of civilization, which was the personal computer and electronic literature. I was wrong. They weren't suppressing these things, except by the aggressive techniques they'd used to

keep ALL competition at bay. I was one of the consultants that persuaded IBM to get into personal computers. They hadn't been suppressing personal computing; THEY HADN'T HAD A CLUE.

So I relented on my belief that if IBM were to design electronic literature, it would mean the end of civilization. Until I saw Prodigy. I had been right. Prodigy, by the way, is the only exception I know to the saying "Nobody ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the American public."

Q. What about "hypertext"?

~~"Hyper-" in the sciences and math~~

In math and the sciences, "hyper-" always meant "extended and generalized." (Unfortunately in medicine it means "excessive and agitated.")

Hypertext, therefore, is extended and generalized writing--the manifest destiny of human literature. Extending writing, and generalizing it for the greatest usefulness and human understanding, has been the issue. The Xanadu transclusive design seems to me vital.

My religion has always been human creativity, freedom and posterity. These are the issues of tomorrow. Hypertext will be at the very center. So mine is a hypertext religion.

DILDONICS

Q. What about "dildonics?"

I was always a sexual malcontent, and experimental, so I thought about these things early.

So people have always talked about sex with machines, but when you get right down to it, it's just, ahem, a question of input and output. If we're talking genital contact, something has to make the contact, and that means what we call, ahem, an input-output device.

Q. And the name?

Every branch of input and output has a name-- computer graphics, bar-code scanners, avionics (the input-output devices that control airplanes).

So what else could the technical side of sex with computers be called? Dildonics.

VISUALIZATION

Q. What about "visualization?"

I've always also been very into movies, and diagrammatic understanding.

It has always been a great possibility that we would use computers to understand, and see in the mind's eye. Hence "visualization." (I didn't coin the word, of course, but I proposed to the University of Illinois in 1972 that they build a Laboratory for Electronic Visualization, using computers. Eventually they did exactly that, under that name, and the term "computer visualization" soon resulted.)

Orson

Q. Has your career been like anyone else's?

Only one person, really, and I didn't know it till quite recently. My career has tracked his all too well. His name was Orson Welles.

Q. Explain.

Orson also had a clever childhood. (From his crib he said to a passing doctor, "The desire to take medicine is one of the things that distinguishes man from the animals," and thus acquired a stepfather.)

His career was off to a roaring start. By twenty-five he had several hits on Broadway and his own theater, he was the best-paid actor in radio, and he had shocked the world with his "War of the Worlds" broadcast. Then he went to Hollywood. Did he go to film school? No, he made "Citizen Kane" as his first film; he WAS film school.

So he started at the top and worked his way down through a life of self-financed projects that didn't work out. Like me. He had to do things his own way, and didn't want a lot of advice. Like me. He had a supportive stepfather despite a remote alcoholic father. Like me.

The oddest resemblance, that I learned fairly recently, was this. In my movie, "The Epiphany of Slocum Furlow," I had to do retakes for a love scene and used a different actress (my wife of that time, Debbie Stone). That the audience does not notice I consider to be achievement. A couple of years ago I found out that in Orson's "Othello," he had used several different actresses to create a single composite Desdemona. You didn't notice it in his movie, either.

Shouldn't you have done your projects some other way?

That's like if someone had said, "Herr von Braun, you could get closer to the moon if you stood on top of a chair." Unclear on the concept. It's not what I'm striving for. Everything I want to do involves Xanadu.

I intend to have a proper tool to do the new things I have always wanted to do.

I wanted to be a Bohemian from the time I was ten. One of the Bohemians that I read about when I was ten was someone named Joe Gould. He was working on something wonderful called *The Oral History of the Universe*, which would keep track of everything interesting anybody said. I thought it was a wonderful undertaking. Unconsciously, in the back of my mind, the Oral History of the Universe became the Xanadu publishing system.

Q. A curious parallel.

Here's the big irony: from the same *New Yorker* piece I found out that it was Joe Gould himself, standing in doorways in Greenwich Village, whose eyes I sometimes met as I walked home from school. It turned out that this was about the time I was reading about him. He looked deeply into me, as if he knew we had a special connection.

Q. What was the connection?

I too have spent my life on a noble, quixotic literary undertaking of great scope.

Much later I found out (in the *New Yorker*) that Joe Gould never finished the Oral History, but for much of his life he was treated to dinner as he told people what it was going to be like. Now I get treated to dinner telling people what Xanadu is going to be like, and pray that it will work out better.

Bohem. again

Q. And you considered yourself a Bohemian?

I wanted to be a Bohemian from the age of ten, I guess for the same reason young people have since the Twelfth Century.

It sounded like art and fun on a low budget, with low overhead, low maintenance, low red tape and sexual freedom. At the age of ten, I was already very concerned about sexual freedom.

I was always a sexual malcontent. When I was ten, in 1947, the Kinsey Report came out. I was outraged to find out that everybody else did what I'd felt guilty about.

In college I nearly got expelled for campaigning for sexual freedom (we're talking 1957). As it happens, my uncle Agnar and my wife Debbie both helped change the sex laws, but that's another story.

Did your childhood have a main theme?

A. I'd say it was SOPHISTICATION. I was raised in Greenwich Village by my grandparents, among foreign movie theaters and bookstores that sold little intellectual magazines. Every spring the painters of the Art Show would sell their wares around our apartment building.

My odd family situation was also very sophisticated. I've read that many children fantasize about how their REAL parents are far-away glamorous figures. That's how it actually was for me. My actual parents were separated before I was born, and I saw them rarely. My mother was an actress in Hollywood, my father was a TV director in New York.

Which meant that I got to be in on the founding of television. My father, when he got out of the army after World War II, had already written a hit on Broadway. But he went straight into what was just beginning-- television. So I got to sit behind him in control rooms starting when I was eleven. I even acted on television in 1950, when I was 12, and saw how TV shows were put together. Once I watched with bated breath as my father talked a show through on the intercom with only two cameras, when the main camera went out

There was no videotape, there could be no retakes, millions would see any error. But he did it flawlessly. I was very proud.

I learned a lot from my father, even though he and I never got along-- I realize now, far too late, that he hated my big words and abstract way of thinking. But he had a different kind of sophistication. He taught me theater, and he helped me see what was really going on-- in magic acts, and at the circus.

TCL

Ev erything I want to do involves parallel transclusive hypermedia-- the Xanadu idea.

PARALLEL TRANSCLUSION-- FOR ALL MY PROJECTS

endho

The Xanadu construct is transclusion-- where the same item, or file card, or paragraph or picture, can be in many different contexts-- and you can VIEW THEM ALL SIDE BY SIDE.

A worldwide publishing system-- the idea others get

THE FUNDAMENTAL IDEA OF fine-grained TRANSCLUSION
(HT, HM were obvious)

I was criticized for saying copyright and royalty were necessary
now that's generally recognized
my notion of fine-grained quotation

Q. What does that technically require?

It turns out not to be a technical issue at all, though for decades I'd thought it was

Q. Is it possible to see a demonstration?

Alas, no. Several entirely different Xanadu projects have gotten within hailing distance of becoming a product, but they've fallen back. For more than a decade, from 1979 to 1992, Xanadu was entirely under the development of other people, and I was relegated to being just a figurehead and speechmaker. Now that has changed. Destry has his guns again.

My Four Institutions

Q. What were your main interests growing up?

In high school, four very sophisticated institutions dominated my thinking: the Museum of Modern Art, *The New Yorker*, Cinema 16 and the Rand Comporation.

Q. The Museum of Modern Art?

The Museum of Modern Art because of their film collection, and the fact that they had declared Cinema to be an Art instead of just a business. And I loved to read about artistic movements-- all their declarations and mini-tempests. Artists fulminated and cared about ideas, and eventually the Museum of Modern Art hung some of their stuff up, if they were lucky. But I knew some of them by sight, walking down 8th Street. Those are Artists, I thought.

But now I know what an artist really is: someone who lives to do his or her own projects, whatever the cost. So Boy am I an artist.

Q. The *New Yorker*?

The *New Yorker* was the very symbol of sophistication. The Algonquin Round Table, the mecca of sophistication in the nineteen-thirties, was mostly *New Yorker* people. As a boy I yearned for the twenties and thirties, when things were really HAPPENING.

And at another level, the *New Yorker* was, and still is, the finest and most searching American prose writing. Good prose writing was a center of our home life. I heard as a kid about the famous character in a French play who was amazed to learn that he had been speaking prose all his life and didn't know it.

When I discovered hypertext, I saw it really as simply the extension of good prose. I believe that good writers have been writing prose hypertext all their lives, but they didn't noTATE it.

Q. The Rand Corporation?

Like others then and since, I was scared of nuclear war, saw it as real and very possible, and wanted to prevent it. The Rand Corporation was where they dealt with stuff like that. I felt that my philosophical ideas would have something to contribute in that field, at the most sophisticated level. I still do.

Cinema 16?

That was an art film society I attended when I was fifteen. It helped me think of movie-making as the loner's art form; I was a low-budget auteurist from the beginning. I guess my hero there was Norman McLaren, the Canadian animator; he was a sort of Jackson Pollock of animation, drawing directly on the film, who exploded the closed medium that Disney had defined.

(My father's high-pressure military style was suited to live TV, which was something else.)

My favorite little movie, which exemplified my view of the creative individual movie-maker, was a little title work of art by Norman McLaren, simply called NOW IS THE TIME TO PUT ON YOUR GLASSES, to come before a stereo movie started. It was beautiful. Few could have done it.

So when I was fifteen I read the American Cinematographer Manual from cover to cover, over and over. I couldn't wait to make movies.

Q. What went wrong? Why didn't you?

Another story. I'm still working on my first.

HO d6 ----------

WP | Database

^

TRANSCLUSIVE STRUX --
same item in many contexts

The plan: rework these together, lapidating them into place, then try to add part of that funny business with the Special Effects.

VERSION 5 BEGINS HERE.

adventures

FIRST ROCK MUSICAL

third go-around.

A prince of the Bohemians that I read about when I was ten
almost all were people that I read about.
It took me a long time to understand all that.
Sure, formally, but n
intellectual and artistic movements
But he did stereo effects in animation with great imagination.
Stereo movies came in the fifties, when I was in high school.
And I'm still on it.
I interpreted it as meaning low budget, low overhead, low maintenance, low red tape and sexual freedom. (Even though these things were very inexplicitly stated back in 1947.
my life was ringed by bullies and catcallers
WORLD OF SCREENS, INTERACTIVE SOFTWARE
THE MANIFEST DESTINY OF LITERATURE

designing this new literature

designing these new forms of interaction
Anybody could quote freely
Intercomparison structures
, against the conventional wisdom.
NOTHING IS LOWER THAN THE PIE-CHART
Tesla, David Bowman

Unfortunately yes. I know two parallels, although both of them had earlier successes: Orson Welles and Nikola Tesla. Although the two of them had more success at the beginning. And Dave Bowman, you might say.

Tesla, Bowman

Q. Explain about you and Tesla.

29

Young engineer Nikola Tesla, walking at sunset before 1900 with a friend in a park in Eastern Europe, saw the lengthing of the shadows and had a sudden vision: how the world of the future could be powered by alternating current. He saw the earth as a rotating dynamo, envisioned the phasing of the current, and much more-- all in an instant.

So he came to America and made it come true, or part of it. We now use alternating current and don't even think of Tesla, even though his system won out over Edison's. And the irony is that we don't even know what else Tesla knew, or how he split the sky with lightning in his experiments at Colorado Springs. Would we have a different world now if Tesla had built his earth power grid, his electric airplanes? Most people think he was crazy. I suspect he knew things we still don't.

Just as I know things about software that nobody else does yet.

Explain about you and Dave Bowman.

Overall my 1960 experience was like the scene in "2001" where Dave Bowman, the hero, is suddenly catapulted across the universe, all alone, seeing unimaginable things, and ending up all alone in a strange cage somewhere. That's what my life has been, because since then I've been on a mission from God to build the Most Fundamental Tool of Human Thought. On which all my other projects wait. That is the cage in which I wait.

Q. Explain about you and Orson Welles.

self-financed projects that didn't work out very well
It's just not the concept I'm striving for.
which is sort of part of your document.
and the issue of how we come to
of freedom, intellect and creativity.

HO d5 ----------

Q. You are best known for coining certain terms in the computer field.

Whence this variety?
("Automation" wasn't coined till I was in college.)
John Diebold
we could see and express.
when you were five?
which is basically what some might call
People think that just because I'm smart
Many role-models in high school-- designers, photographers, movie directors, philosophers
A few heroes and mentors I actually knew
at the beginning of a show.
Sophistication continued to be my watchword in high school.
Three
so I loved stereo movies
'metaphors'
-- checkers
So when I was fifteen I read the *American Cinematographer Manual* over and over. I couldn't wait to make movies.
But the biggest issue for me in high school
I was really ready for computers, though of course at that time everybody thought they were "mathematical."
and the dance of Civilized Argument.
at University of Chicago and then Harvard, but graduate school is a horrible experience,
At Harvard, in 1960, I took a computer course, and
low overhead, low maintenance
As a kid I was always literary and intellectual.
Pdgms--
SYSTS OF THINKING

Q. So what would you say about the future of IBM?
Obsolete power corrupts obsoletely.

HO d4 ----------

But also some Onics-type words:
I can't think of any others at the moment.
virtual reality
there's been no way to noTATE it.
He was cynical too,

HO d3 ----------

aggressive and highfalutin intellectual

LESSER HEADING

z

y

x

z

y

x

w

HO d ----------

ENDLINE_____ _____ **STAY OFF HERE**

What were your problems with school?

It was so BORING, most of the time, except when I couldn't understand. Either I understand something way ahead of everybody, or it takes me YEARS.

People get upset trying to explain things to me, because I insist on clarifying points they think are simple and I don't. And they think I'm making fun of them, when I'm TOTALLY CONFUSED.

Even today, when people try to explain things to me, they think my questions are heckling them when I'm absolutely mystified. People think that just because I'm bright I can instantly adopt their point of view. Whereas I may instantly see DIFFICULTIES in their point of view, or get lost at

I don't understand the explanations they find either simple.

corners of ambiguity in the explanations that they don't even recognize.

If I get confused, I have to clarify it right away or I just can't go on. Teachers found this disruptive. I found THEM disruptive.

I tend to be on forefronts. Attacking teachers was one of those forefronts, unfortunately. I was ahead there too. But at least I didn't actually do it.

Oh, I hated school early. And there had to be a better way than school. I would sneak out to hang out in bookstores and watch foreign movies.

My homeroom teacher in seventh grade was out to break me, but I was not going to be broken. I sharpened a screwdriver to stab him, but thought better of it, and walked out of school, I think it was the next day. So I was a seventh-grade dropout. My grandparents made me go back the following year, to another school, but my sympathy is with the dropouts, even though you'd consider me an educated person by now.

Role-Models

Q. Did you have a role-model as a boy?

Many. My grandmother had held up to me Frank Lloyd Wright and Leonardo daVinci, Oscar Wilde and Joan of Arc. By the age of twelve, I had chosen my own heroes: Buckminster Fuller, Bertrand Russell, Walt Disney and Orson Welles. If you combined all those images you'd kind of get me.

But my only living role-model was my Norwegian Uncle Agnar Mykle. The other men I had met were all reserved, either shy like my grandfater or surly like my father. Agnar was enthusiastic and outgoing, not afraid to be interested in everything, and I thought, THAT'S the way to be.

I had many more heroes later on, but few that were alive.

Q. Why have you always been at war with the conventional world?

I'm not sure how it started, but it was on all fronts. I hated school, including a lot of my teachers. Throughout childhood my life I felt ringed by bullies and catcallers. I associated sports with bullies, so I grew up hating sports, like a lot of intellectuals.

(Sadly, college destroyed my relation to my biological parents altogether. They had insisted on my going to college, thinking perhaps that it would make me more Normal or Realistic, but instead I got even more insufferably sophisticated, which deepened the gap between us. But I was close to my grandparents until they died.)

Which is how I saw most people at the time, especially businessmen. My picture of most businessmen was like Mr. Potter, the evil banker in "It's a Wonderful Life." But, oddly, my picture of a good businessman was Howard Hughes, because he wouldn't give in to the conventional people.

General Schematics-- as part of College?

My junior year I found a name for it all. I called it General Schematics, and I wrote a big paper on it. It was about all generalization, commonality and expression. I've been reworking it ever since.

In different decades I was going to publish it under names like *Truth, Man and Choice*. Also The Ranges and Changes of Ideas. Later, *Prinicipia Schematica*.

But the only way to publish it properly is as hypertext.

Q. We're running short of time. What about all your wacky adventures--

You mean, writing the first rock musical, singing with David Crosby in coffeehouses, having Gregory Bateson as an office-mate, being a dolphin photography for John Lilly, living with a hooker, the orgy palaces of the eighties, and my adventures at the Woodstock festivals? And why I actually DID think "You're So Vain" was written about me?

Q. Yeah--

Let's skip all that and get on to something more important.

call "computer literacy"-- problems of Backups and Installations and constantly having to upgrade everything, and viciously expensive software designed by inane teams of

nitwits. And screen windows that the program can't draw lines into from outside.

HOW DID THIS BEGIN? Water... College

Theme of Childhood

Q. This is rather strange and disjointed.

The literature would be based on links and transclusions.

Transclusions?

Dropped out of Grade School

Q. But how did you get to college? I thought you dropped out of grade school.

WHAT IS XU?

Q. We'll get back to the words.